Waste Immobilisation Plant which is within the exclusion zone of the Tarapur Atomic Power Station. There is no human habitation within this zone.

Enquiry of Charar Incident

*68. SHRI PARMOD MAHAJAN:
SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have so for made any enquiry about the burning and destruction of the shrine and the town at Charar-e-Sharief in May, 1995;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number and nationality of militants who were in the town and in the shrine and since when they were there;

(d) what steps Government had taken for saving the shrine and arresting the militants and the circumstances of their escape;

(e) the action taken against persons found responsible for their escape; and

(f) the total amount sanctioned and the expenditure so far incurred on the re-construction of shrine and the burnt houses at Charar-e-Sharief?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI):

(a) and (b) No independent inquiry has been held into the incident.

(c) As per available information, the presence of militants in Charar-e-Sharief was first noticed towards the beginning of January, 1995. Their number in the shrine was placed between 20 and 40 and the estimates of the total number in the town varied between 40 and 350. Although there was confirmed information that one Major Mast Gul, an Afghan mercenary was leading the cohort of terrorists holed up in the town, there was no firm estimates of how many of them were foreign mercenaries.

(d) Since the shrine was a fragile wooden structure, the security forces could not storm the place to evict mercenaries and militants. Further, mercenaries had mined the area all around the shrine and the adjoining mosque and also planted explosives extensively. The security forces, therefore, occupied the high features of the surrounding hills at a distance of l-Vi Kilometres and kept a watch over the town to prevent further infiltration of militants into the town. Any engagement with the militants so holed up was avoided to prevent loss of innocent lives of civilians in cross fire. Instead offers of safe passage across the Line of Control were repeatedly made by the State Government to the militants which were rejected. When despite all these precautions the militants set the town and shrine on fire on the day of Id, the security forces entered the town to round up the militants. In the process 9 militants were killed and one foreign mercenary by the name Abu Jindal was apprehended.

(e) There is report of 29 militants having been killed including 5 foreigners in the exchange of fire that took place after the militants set the town and the shrine on fire and the security forces closed up in the town. In the fierce fighting and the chaos that ensued, many of the militants managed to escape. No action has been taken for this against any persons.

(f) Reconstruction of the Charar-e-Sharief shrine by the Government is not envisaged as there has been no demand for this from the people. The burnt houses are being reconstructed by the owners themselves. For this, they have been paid ex-gratia relief of Rs. 1 lac in each case from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund in addition to the relief to which the fire victims are entitled from the State Government @50% of the loss subject to a ceiling of Rs. 1 lac in each case. As per information supplied by the State Government sanction has been issued in favour of fire victims for a total amount of Rs. 14.50 crores out of which

Rs. 11.66 crores has been disbursed to date.

Effect of wine on health

*69. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have carried out ,or propose to carry out research to the effect that wine in moderate quantity helps in increasing life-span and that who drink wine, as opposed to beer or spirits or no alcohol at all, had lower death rate; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) As per information available, no such research has been carried out in India.

(b) Docs not arise.

Special programme for industrialisation

*70. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some State Governments have drawn up special programmes with regard to industrialisation;

(b) if so, the proposals received from the State Governments of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra in that regard; and

(c) the extent of financial assistance sought by these State Governments for the industrial growth of their respective States'?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN): (a) to (c) The States/Union Territories have been advised to formulate their own policies and programmes to provide a conducive environment for setting up of new industrial projects in their States within the broad frame work of the New Industrial Policy of the Government of India. The State Governments need not obtain any permission from Government of India for implementation of their Industrial Policy/special programmes.

Governments of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra have announced their policies which include special incentives/programmes envisaged for industrialisaton. The financial implications of implementing various schemes/programmes are reflected in the annual plan proposals of the respective State Governments made to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission provides central assistance to the State as loans and grants to finance annual plans including allocation for industries.

Plague virus originated from Kazakhstan

*71. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the plague virus which hit Surat so badly was originated from Kazakhstan; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C. SILVERA): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Health have constituted a Technical Advisory Committee to determine the factors responsible for the outbreak of Plague and other related matters. The report is awaited.

Employment opportunities in rural areas

*72. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the population of rural areas and the number of persons employed, self-employed,semi-employed and unemployed for the last three years, category-wise;

(b) the average annual income of rural areas as compared to urban areas; and

(c) the steps/measures Government propose to bridge this income gap?